General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 February 2001

Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 95 (*d*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/55/582/Add.4)*]

55/203. Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the principles and commitments enshrined in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development[1] and the principles embodied in the Declaration of Barbados[2] and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[3] as well as other relevant declarations and international instruments,

Recalling the Declaration[4] and review document[4] adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session,

Taking into account all other relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, including resolution 54/225 of 22 December 1999,

Reaffirming the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,[5] and emphasizing the fundamental character of the Convention,

Conscious that the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and that they need to be considered as a whole,

Recalling the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, signed at Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, on 24 March 1983, which contains the definition of the wider Caribbean region of which the Caribbean Sea is part,[6]

---

[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex I.

[2] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[3] Ibid., annex II.

[4] See resolution S-22/2, annex.

[5] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.V.10.

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1506, No. 25974.

Welcoming the adoption, on 16 October 1999 in Aruba, of the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities[7] to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region,

Welcoming also the entry into force, on 18 June 2000, of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife[7] to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region,

Recalling the relevant work done by the International Maritime Organization,

Considering that the Caribbean Sea area includes a large number of States, countries and territories, most of which are developing countries and small island developing States that are ecologically fragile, structurally weak and economically vulnerable and are also affected, inter alia, by their limited capacity, narrow resource base, need for financial resources, high levels of poverty and the resulting social problems and the challenges and opportunities of globalization and trade liberalization,

Recognizing that the Caribbean Sea has a unique biodiversity and highly fragile ecosystem,

Emphasizing that the Caribbean countries have a high degree of vulnerability occasioned by climate change and variability, associated phenomena, such as the rise in sea level, the El Niño/Southern Oscillation phenomenon and the increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters caused by hurricanes, floods and droughts, and that they are also subject to natural disasters, such as those caused by volcanoes, tsunamis and earthquakes,

Welcoming the establishment of the working group on the El Niño/La Niña phenomenon within the framework of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction,

Bearing in mind the heavy reliance of most of the Caribbean economies on their coastal areas, as well as on the marine environment in general, to achieve their sustainable development needs and goals,

Recognizing the Caribbean Environment Outlook process currently being undertaken by the United Nations Environment Programme, and welcoming the support being provided by the Caribbean Environment Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme towards its implementation,

Acknowledging that the intensive use of the Caribbean Sea for maritime transport, as well as the considerable number and interlocking character of the maritime areas under national jurisdiction where Caribbean countries exercise their rights and duties under international law, present a challenge for the effective management of the resources,

Noting the problem of marine pollution caused, inter alia, by land-based sources and the continuing threat of pollution from ship-generated waste and sewage as well as from the accidental release of hazardous and noxious substances in the Caribbean Sea area,

---

[7] See www.cep.unep.org/law.

Taking note of resolution GC(44)/RES/17 of 22 September 2000 of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency on safety of transport of radioactive materials,[8]

Mindful of the diversity and dynamic interaction and competition among socio-economic activities for the use of the coastal areas and the marine environment and their resources,

Mindful also of the efforts of the Caribbean countries to address in a more holistic manner the sectoral issues relating to the management of the Caribbean Sea area and, in so doing, to promote an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development, through a regional cooperative effort among Caribbean countries,

Noting the efforts of the Caribbean countries, within the framework of the Association of Caribbean States, to develop further support for their concept of the Caribbean Sea as an area of special importance, in the context of sustainable development and in conformity with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,[5]

Cognizant of the importance of the Caribbean Sea to present and future generations and its importance to the heritage, the continuing economic well-being and sustenance of people living in the area, and the urgent need for the countries of the region to take appropriate steps for its preservation and protection, with the support of the international community,

1. *Recognizes* the importance of adopting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development;

2. *Encourages* the further promotion of an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development, in accordance with the recommendations contained in resolution 54/225, as well as the provisions of Agenda 21,[9] the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[3] the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly[4] and the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and in conformity with relevant international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;[5]

3. *Also encourages* the continued efforts of the Caribbean countries to develop further an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development and, in this regard, to continue to develop regional cooperation in the management of their ocean affairs in the context of sustainable development, to address such issues as land-based pollution, pollution from ships and the diversity and dynamic interaction of, and competition among, socio-economic activities for the use of the coastal areas and the marine environment and their resources;

4. *Calls upon* the United Nations system and the international community to assist Caribbean countries and their regional organizations in their efforts to ensure the protection of the Caribbean Sea from degradation as a result of pollution from

[8] See International Atomic Energy Agency, *Resolutions and Other Decisions of the General Conference, Forty-fourth Regular Session, 18-22 September 2000* (GC(44)/RES/DEC(2000).

[9] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

ships, in particular through the illegal release of oil and other harmful substances, from illegal dumping or accidental release of hazardous waste, including radioactive materials, nuclear waste and dangerous chemicals, in violation of relevant international rules and standards, as well as pollution from land-based activities;

5. *Calls upon* all relevant States to take the necessary steps to bring into force, and to support the implementation of, the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities,[7] in order to protect the marine environment of the Caribbean Sea from land-based pollution and degradation;

6. *Calls upon* all States to become contracting parties to relevant international agreements to promote the protection of the marine environment of the Caribbean Sea from pollution and degradation from ships;

7. *Invites* intergovernmental organizations within the United Nations system to continue efforts to assist Caribbean countries to become parties to the relevant conventions and protocols and to implement them effectively;

8. *Calls upon* the international community, the United Nations system and the multilateral financial institutions, including the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to support actively the above-mentioned approach;

9. *Calls upon* Member States to improve as a matter of priority their emergency response capabilities and the containment of environmental damage, particularly in the Caribbean Sea, in the event of natural disasters or of an accident or incident relating to maritime navigation;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-seventh session, under the sub-item entitled "Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States" of the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development", on the implementation of the present resolution, taking into account the views expressed by relevant regional organizations.

87th plenary meeting
20 December 2000